WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

[1] An electronic data management apparatus (1, 20, 30) comprising:

data storing means (6) storing data;

5 identification data storing means (11) having identification data for authentication registered therein;

input means (3, 21, 31, 32) for entering authentication information about a user;

authentication means (12) performing authentication

10 of said user by comparing data entered from said input means (3, 21, 31, 32) with said identification data registered in said identification data storing means (11); and

interface means (9) connected to an electronic

15 computer to transmit and receive said data;

wherein access to said data is permitted when said entered data and said identification data match each other as a result of said authentication;

said electronic data management apparatus further

20 comprising:

program storing means (7) storing a control program;

wherein after said user has been authenticated by said authentication means (12), said control program is installed in said computer to enable reading said data

25 from said computer.

[2] An electronic data management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control program unlocks said electronic data management apparatus (1, 20, 30) upon

completion of said authentication by said authentication means (12), and allows said computer connected thereto to start automatic recognition of said electronic data management apparatus (1, 20, 30).

5   [3] An electronic data management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

switch control means (10) selectively switching between said data storing means (6) and said program storing means (7).

10   [4] An electronic data management apparatus according to claim 1 or 3, wherein writing to said data storing means (6) can be performed from said computer, and a history of handling said data on said computer or a history of operating said computer to handle said data is

15   written to said data storing means (6) by said control program.

[5] An electronic data management apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said identification data is fingerprint data, wherein fingerprint information

20   about said user is entered from said input means (3), and said authentication means (12) performs fingerprint authentication of said user.

[6] An electronic data management apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said identification

25   data is a registered personal identification number, wherein a personal identification number is entered from said input means (21), and said authentication means (12) authenticates said user by comparing said personal

identification number with said registered personal identification number.

[7] An electronic data management apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said authentication means (12) has a mechanical lock (32) and a key (31), so that said user having said key (31) is permitted to access said data.

[8] A control program for use with an electronic data management apparatus, said electronic data management apparatus having:

an authentication information storing area (11) that stores registered authentication information;

an input section (3, 21, 31, 32) for entering identification information about a user;

an authentication section (12) having an authentication function of performing authentication of said user by comparing said authentication information and said identification information with each other;

a data storing area (6) that stores data; and

a program storing area (7) that stores a control program;

wherein when said electronic data management apparatus is connected to an electronic computer, said authentication section (12) performs said authentication of said user, and upon completion of said authentication, said user is permitted to access said data storing area (11);

said control program being installed in said

computer after said authentication has been performed;

wherein when an operation is performed on said computer by using said data, said control program operates said computer so as to store a history of said operation.

5 [9] A control program for use with an electronic data management apparatus according to claim 8, wherein when said electronic data management apparatus is disconnected from said computer, said control program deletes said data transmitted into said computer.

10 [10] A control program for use with an electronic data management apparatus according to claim 9, which incorporates an automatic disappearance program having a function of causing said control program to disappear automatically when said electronic data management
15 apparatus is disconnected from said computer.

[11] A control program for use with an electronic data management apparatus according to claim 8 or 9, which has a function of becoming disabled from operating in said computer.

20 [12] A control program for use with an electronic data management apparatus according to claim 8, which has:

a history obtaining function of obtaining at least one history selected from histories of duplicating, deleting, editing, viewing, reading and writing said data
25 on said computer, or a history of files or new data created by using said data;

a data recording function of writing said history to said data storing area (6); and

a transmission function of transmitting said history by using communication means.

[13] A control program for use with an electronic data management apparatus according to claim 8 or 12,
5   wherein said history is an operation history of operating from input means of said computer.

[14] A control program for use with an electronic data management apparatus according to claim 8, which limits a file system of said computer so as to permit only
10 at least one operation selected from duplicating, deleting, editing, viewing, reading and writing said data on said computer by a specific application program or arbitrarily.

[15] A control program for use with an electronic data management apparatus according to claim 8, which runs
15 in a kernel mode in which all instructions of an OS of said computer are executable.

[16] An electronic data management method using an electronic data management apparatus (1, 20, 30), said electronic data management apparatus having:
20   an authentication information storing section (11) that stores authentication information;

an input section (3, 21, 31, 32) for entering authentication information about a user;

an authentication section (12) that performs
25 authentication of said user by using data from said input section (3, 21, 31, 32); and

a data storing section (6) that stores data;

wherein when said electronic data management

apparatus is connected to an electronic computer, said authentication section (12) performs said authentication of said user, and said user having said authentication information matching said authentication information

5 registered in said authentication information storing section (11) is permitted to access said data;

wherein said electronic data management apparatus has a program storing section (7) that stores a control program, and upon completion of said authentication, said

10 control program is installed in said computer to ensure a use environment in which said data is used in said computer.

[17] An electronic data management method according to claim 16, wherein said use environment is a limitation

15 that permits access to said data only from a specific application program that runs on said computer.

[18] An electronic data management method according to claim 16, wherein said control program has a function of leaving a history of operating from input means of said

20 computer, or a history of access to said data in at least one operation selected from duplicating, deleting, editing, viewing, reading and writing operations using said data, or a history of files or new data created by using said data.

25 [19] An electronic data management method according to claim 16, wherein when said electronic data management apparatus (1, 20, 30) is disconnected from said computer, said control program deletes at least one of said data in

said computer, duplicates of said data, and data or files created by using said data.

[20] An electronic data management method according to any one of claims 16, 18 and 19, wherein said control program incorporates an automatic disappearance program having a function of causing said control program to disappear automatically.

[21] An electronic data management method according to any one of claims 16, 18 and 19, wherein said control program has a function of becoming disabled from functioning in said computer.